

a selectable threshold point circuit connected to the voltage following circuit and operable to select one of a plurality of values for a threshold point of the power supply; and

a switch circuit coupled to the selectable threshold point circuit and the voltage following circuit, the switch circuit cooperating with the selectable threshold point circuit to generate an output indicating whether the value of the power supply has increased above or decreased below the selected value for the threshold point in response to the followed value of the power supply.

2. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit is operable to receive a plurality of control signals.

3. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit is operable to output a programmable amount of current.

4. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit comprises a plurality of current mirror transistors.

5. The voltage detector of Claim 4 wherein at least one of the current mirror transistors is coupled to a respective switch transistor.

6. The voltage detector of Claim 5 wherein the switch transistor is operable to receive a control signal.

LAW OFFICES OF
SKJERVEN MORRILL
MACPHERSON LLP

3 EMBARCADERO CENTER
SUITE 2800
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94111
(415) 217-6000
FAX (415) 434-0646

7. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit comprises a plurality of current mirror transistors, at least two of the current mirror transistors having a different width-to-length ratio.

8. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the switch circuit comprises a transistor.

9. The voltage detector of Claim 8 wherein a gate of the transistor receives the followed value of the power supply.

10. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the switch circuit and the selectable threshold point circuit are connected at a detection node, the switch circuit operable to pull a voltage at the detection node to ground when the value of the power supply is above the selected value for the threshold point.

11. The voltage detector of Claim 1 wherein the switch circuit and the selectable threshold point circuit are connected at a detection node, the selectable threshold point circuit operable to pull a voltage at the detection node up to the value of the power supply when the power supply is below the selected value for the threshold point.

12. The voltage detector of Claim 1 further comprising a current source generator block coupled to the voltage-following circuit and the switch circuit.

13. The voltage detector of Claim 12 wherein the current source generator block comprises:

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3 EMBARCADERO CENTER
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a reference transistor; and

a current mirror transistor coupled to the reference transistor and the switch circuit.

14. The voltage detector of Claim 12 wherein the current source generator block comprises:

a reference transistor; and

a plurality of current mirror transistors coupled to the reference transistor and the switch circuit.

15. The voltage detector of Claim 1 further comprising a voltage level detection circuit coupled to the selectable threshold point circuit and the switch circuit, the voltage level detection circuit operable to output a signal indicating whether the value of the power supply is above or below the selected value for the threshold point.

16. A method for detecting a voltage level performed in a circuit, the method comprising:

selecting one of a plurality of values for a threshold point for a power supply;

tracking a voltage value of the power supply; and

generating an output that indicates whether the voltage value of the power supply has increased above or decreased below the selected value for the threshold point in response to the tracked value of the power supply.

17. The method of Claim 16 wherein selecting comprises transmitting at least one control signal to the circuit.

18. The method of Claim 16 wherein selecting comprises turning on at least one switch transistor.

19. The method of Claim 16 wherein generating comprises pulling a voltage level at a detecting node to ground when the value of the power supply exceeds the selected threshold point.

20. The method of Claim 16 wherein generating comprises pulling a voltage level at a detecting node to the value of the power supply when the value of the power supply is below the selected threshold point.

21. A system comprising:

a memory;

a microprocessor; and

a voltage detector coupled to the memory and the microprocessor, the voltage detector comprising:

a voltage following circuit connected to a power supply and operable to follow a voltage value of the power supply;

a selectable threshold point circuit connected to the voltage following circuit and operable to select one of a plurality of values for a threshold point of the power supply; and

a switch circuit coupled to the selectable threshold point circuit and the voltage following circuit, the switch circuit cooperating with the selectable threshold point circuit to generate an output indicating whether the value of the

power supply has increased above or decreased below the selected value for the threshold point in response to the followed value of the power supply.

22. The system of Claim 21 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit is operable to receive a plurality of control signals.

23. The system of Claim 21 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit is operable to output a programmable amount of current.

24. The system of Claim 21 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit comprises a plurality of current mirror transistors.

25. The system of Claim 24 wherein at least one of the current mirror transistors is coupled to a respective switch transistor.

26. The system of Claim 25 wherein the switch transistor is operable to receive a control signal.

27. The system of Claim 21 wherein the selectable threshold point circuit comprises a plurality of current mirror transistors, at least two of the current mirror transistors having a different width-to-length ratio.

28. The system of Claim 21 wherein the switch circuit comprises a transistor.

29. The system of Claim 28 wherein a gate of the transistor receives the followed value of the power supply.

30. The system of Claim 21 wherein the switch circuit and the selectable threshold point circuit are connected at a detection node, the switch circuit operable to pull a voltage at the detection node to ground when the value of the power supply is above the selected value for the threshold point.

31. The system of Claim 21 wherein the switch circuit and the selectable threshold point circuit are connected at a detection node, the selectable threshold point circuit operable to pull a voltage at the detection node up to the value of the power supply when the power supply is below the selected value for the threshold point.

32. The system of Claim 21 further comprising a current source generator block coupled to the voltage-following circuit and the switch circuit.

33. The system of Claim 32 wherein the current source generator block comprises:
a reference transistor; and
a current mirror transistor coupled to the reference transistor and the switch circuit.

34. The system of Claim 32 wherein the current source generator block comprises:
a reference transistor; and
a plurality of current mirror transistors coupled to the reference transistor and the switch circuit.

35. The system of Claim 21 further comprising a voltage level detection circuit coupled to the selectable threshold point circuit and the switch circuit, the voltage level detection circuit operable to output a signal indicating whether the value of the power supply is above or below the selected value for the threshold point.

36. A voltage detector energized by a supply voltage, the detector comprising:
a plurality of control signal terminals receiving a plurality of control signals;
a selectable threshold point circuit comprising a plurality of reference current sources connected to a common circuit node, each reference current source operable to conduct a respective reference current magnitude and to be controlled by a respective control signal;

a transistor having a current terminal connected to the common circuit node and further having a control terminal controlled by the supply voltage, the transistor operable to conduct a switch current having a switch current magnitude responsive to a magnitude of the supply voltage; and

an output terminal carrying an output signal responsive to a voltage at the common circuit node, a first state of the output signal corresponding to a first condition wherein the transistor acts to limit a sum of the reference current magnitudes, and a second state of the output signal corresponding to a second condition wherein the selectable threshold point circuit acts to limit the switch current magnitude, whereby the voltage detector detects a sufficiency of the supply voltage.

37. A voltage detector energized by a supply voltage and comprising:

a selectable threshold point circuit operable to conduct a reference current having a selected one of a plurality of predefined current magnitudes through a circuit node in a first sense; and

a switch circuit operable to conduct a voltage-controlled current through the circuit node in a sense opposite to the first sense, a magnitude of the voltage-controlled current being responsive to a magnitude of the supply voltage, the switch circuit further operable to generate an output indicating whether the supply voltage exceeds a threshold value responsive to whether the selected one of the plurality of predefined current magnitudes limits the voltage-controlled current.

37. A voltage detector energized by a supply voltage and comprising:

a selectable threshold point circuit operable to conduct a selected one of a plurality of predefined current magnitudes through a circuit node in a first sense; and

a switch circuit operable to conduct a voltage-controlled current through the circuit node in a sense opposite to the first sense, a magnitude of the voltage-controlled current being responsive to a magnitude of the supply voltage, the switch circuit further operable to generate an output indicating whether the supply voltage exceeds a threshold value responsive to whether the selected one of the plurality of predefined current magnitudes limits the voltage-controlled current.

of what?
lower voltage
higher voltage

38. The voltage detector of Claim 37 wherein:

the selected one of a plurality of predefined current magnitudes is selected in response to a plurality of control signals.

39. The voltage detector of Claim 37 wherein:

the selectable threshold point circuit comprises a plurality of current mirror transistors.

40. The voltage detector of Claim 39 wherein:

at least one of the current mirror transistors is coupled to a respective switch transistor controlled by a respective one of the control signals.

41. The voltage detector of Claim 39 wherein:

at least two of the current mirror transistors have mutually different width-to-length ratios.

42. The voltage detector of Claim 37 wherein:

the switch circuit consists essentially of a weak MOS transistor.

43. A method for detecting a voltage level performed in a circuit, the method comprising:

selecting one of a plurality of amounts of current, the selected amount of current determining a selected value for a threshold point for a power supply;

tracking a voltage value of the power supply; and

generating an output that indicates whether the voltage value of the power supply has increased above or decreased below the selected value for the threshold point by determining whether the selected amount of current acts to limit a further current generated in response to the tracked voltage value of the power supply.

44. The method of Claim 43 wherein selecting comprises transmitting at least one control signal to the circuit.

45. The method of Claim 43 wherein selecting comprises turning on at least one switch transistor.

46. The method of Claim 43 wherein generating comprises pulling a voltage level at a detecting node to ground when the value of the power supply exceeds the selected threshold point.

47. The method of Claim 43 wherein generating comprises pulling a voltage level at a detecting node to the value of the power supply when the value of the power supply is below the selected threshold point.

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